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CONGRESSIONAL RECORD — HOUSE

June 5

1961

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TRACTORS FOR CUBANS

(Mr. MICHEL asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. MICHEL. Mr. Speaker, ever since last Thursday, when I criticized in a special order on the floor of this House the "Tractors for Cubans" exchange, letters and telegrams have been pouring into my office in support of my position. My principal point during the course of those remarks was that the tractors being asked for were not designed for agricultural purposes but rather were 23-ton track-type caterpillar D-8's which were designed for everything but farming operations, and cost \$30,000, or more each.

The last report of the negotiating committee which I read in the press suggests that the committee recognizes this and is now talking about 50 heavy duty track-type tractors and 450 general purpose tractors. I assume the latter are the traditional row-crop tractors which sell in the neighborhood of \$4,500 to \$5,000. These are not built by the Caterpillar Tractor Co., which Castro specified, and I predict Castro will refuse the offer of the committee for he knew precisely what he was asking for in the first instance—heavy duty machines to build up his defense establishment. If Castro accepts the general purpose tractors, we are talking about a considerably less sum of money to finance their purchase, and I raise the question of what the committee will do with the difference between \$3 million, which is sufficient to

purchase the smaller tractors and the originally requested \$15 million for the larger ones. The smaller sum, however, does not in any way make it a more palatable deal for me. It is still outright blackmail, and there have already been indications that the North Vietnamese will be asking a price for any American-trained guerrillas captured in that area if the Castro deal is consummated.